

Children of centenarians live longer, have lower risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes

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A recent study appearing in the November issue of *Journal of American Geriatrics Society* revealed that centenarian offspring (children of parents who lived to be at least 97 years old) retain important cardiovascular advantages from their parents compared to a similarly-aged cohort. The study is the first to assess the health of centenarian offspring over time and could be important for future research, as the subjects may be used as a model of healthy aging.

The findings show that centenarian offspring have a 78 percent lower risk for heart attacks, 83 percent lower likelihood of stroke and an 86 percent lower risk of developing diabetes mellitus.

Additionally, the study found that centenarian offspring who were followed in the study were 81 percent less likely to die than the reference group of similarly-aged patients during the follow-up period. The survival rate is evidence that longevity runs in families, and the results reinforce the notion that there may be physiological and genetic reasons that longevity runs in families.

The results are consistent with previous research, which suggested that the avoidance or delay of cardiovascular disease and cardiovascular risk factors, including high blood pressure and diabetes, runs strongly in the families of centenarians, particularly amongst their children.

Dellara F. Terry, co-author of the study, points out that offspring of centenarians maintain these cardiovascular advantages throughout their

lives. "These advantages persisted over the several years of the study when they are compared to a similarly-aged group whose parents did not survive to very old age," Terry said.

Source: Wiley

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